

MA DEP

**Recycling Participation Study
East Boston Pilot**

September 1997

Outline

I. Introduction and Methodology
--

II. Key Findings

III. Recycling Awareness

IV. Overview of Recycling Patterns

V. Overall Attitudes toward Recycling

VI. Why Residents Recycle

VII. Home Ownership Recycling Pattern

VIII. Demographics

Introduction

This pilot study explores East Boston residents' attitudes towards recycling, their recycling behaviors, and their awareness of current recycling programs. We also examine the effectiveness of existing messages and communications in raising awareness of the various recycling programs and motivating people to modify their behaviors by participating in or increasing their level of recycling. In addition, we investigate people's attitudes toward recycling, their beliefs about why they do or do not participate, and what might make them more likely to do so in the future.

A follow-up study will be conducted in November 1997 to determine whether recycling efforts have increased following the Recycling Participation Campaign.

Methodology

Interviews were conducted by telephone (CATI) with 300 heads or co-heads of East Boston households July 23-31, 1997.

To properly reflect the characteristics of the East Boston community, quotas were set for homeowners and renters to be representative of the East Boston community.

Weighted sample sizes are as follows:

Homeowners	.88
Renters	1.06

The sample margin of error for overall weighted results is $\pm 5.7\%$ at the midpoint of the 95% confidence interval.

Outline

I. Introduction and Methodology

II. Key Findings

III. Recycling Awareness

IV. Overview of Recycling Patterns

V. Overall Attitudes toward Recycling

VI. Why Residents Recycle

VII. Home Ownership Recycling Pattern

VIII. Demographics

Key Findings

Behavior

- Nearly eight in ten residents say that they do recycle normal household waste (newspapers, cans, glass jars, and non-returnable plastic bottles) at least sometimes. However, only 42% say that they are doing all they currently can.
- Twenty-seven percent of residents are not participating in recycling and thus, an effort should be made to illustrate the benefits of recycling to this group.
- Sixty percent of East Boston residents report that they always recycle, with newspapers and plastic bottles being the most frequently recycled items.
- Two in five residents say they are doing all that they currently can. Residents who recycle at least one common item, "Swing recyclers," represent 31% of the sample. Twenty-seven percent of residents are making no effort to recycle.

Overall attitudes toward recycling

- While 82% of residents believe recycling is good for society, residents that are doing all they can ("Alpha recyclers") are most likely to see the personal and community benefits of recycling.

Potential for increased participation

- East Boston residents believe in the inherent "goodness" of recycling, but their behavior does not necessarily reflect these beliefs.
- Potential exists in having current recyclers recycle additional types of materials. These range from the common materials (newspaper, glass, metal, plastic) to less common (e.g., regular paper).
- The challenge is that nearly half of residents believe that getting started is not easy.
- Despite renters' beliefs that there are personal and community benefits to recycling, they are less likely than homeowners to recycle. Renters, therefore, may be a suitable segment to target for increased recycling participation.
- The habitual activity of regular recycling is related to ease and convenience. People may be encouraged to recycle by providing easy to remember schedules and easy storage. The constant reminder and social pressure of seeing neighbors' bins is another important factor in making recycling a routine event.

Recycling awareness

- Thirty-five percent of respondents say they have heard "something" about recycling lately **what's recyclable, promoting recycling, and separating recyclables** among the messages they have

heard. However, 29% of residents say they would not know where to turn if they were seeking information on recycling.

Recycling demographics

- Recycling is related to age, with younger residents recycling less than older residents. The youngest group (age 18-25) recycles least and the over 65 group recycles most. This is probably related to patterns of living: more younger residents live in apartments and have lived in the community for shorter periods of time.
- Residents who have lived in the community for relatively long periods of time are more likely to recycle all of the four common recyclables. This may be driven by their increased interaction with, and investment in, the community, and it also may be related to the idea that recycling can become a "habit."
- As suspected, recycling is related to home ownership since homeowners are more likely to report recycling all that they can (59% versus 34% of renters), and renters are more likely to be non-participants (33% versus 13% of homeowners). This may be due to **storage** issues (renters are twice as likely to believe storing things to recycle later is a problem) and the belief that **getting started is not easy**. Since renters are more likely to be new to the East Boston community, they may not be aware of where to recycle and, thus, may find it more difficult to get started.

Key Critical Success Factors that will show that the Recycling Participation Campaign has been successful:

- Increased, positive awareness of recycling. Before the campaign, 35% of residents have heard something about recycling. However, only 16% of residents who have heard something have heard about **promoting/the importance of recycling**.
- Nearly three in ten East Boston residents (29%) would not know where to turn for recycling information. We would expect this number to increase after the campaign.
- Nearly three in ten of East Boston residents (29%) report that, at best, they sometimes recycle. This represents perhaps the area of greatest potential in terms of increasing participation rates and the range of materials recycled.
- We would hope to see residents (especially renters) put their beliefs into action by increasing their recycling frequency.
- The closer the benefit comes to the individual level, the less likely all residents are able to see the benefits of recycling. Residents need to feel that recycling does have a positive impact on their community and themselves personally.
- The belief that recycling is good for society is largely driven by the notion that recycling conserves resources for future generations.

- Residents need to believe that getting started is easy. Recycling will become a habit by making it **easy to start** and by providing reminders (such as **neighbors' bins**). People may be encouraged to start recycling by providing **easy-to-remember schedules** and offering tips on making **storage easier**.

Outline

I. Introduction and Methodology

II. Key Findings

III. Recycling Awareness

IV. Overview of Recycling Patterns

V. Overall Attitudes toward Recycling

VI. Why Residents Recycle

VII. Home Ownership Recycling Pattern

VIII. Demographics

Recycling Awareness

Of the 35% of residents who had heard "something" about recycling lately, residents were most likely (20% of those who have heard something) to have heard about **separating recyclables/how to recycle** (i.e. separating bottles, cans and newspapers, putting newspapers in brown bags, and seminars on recycling).

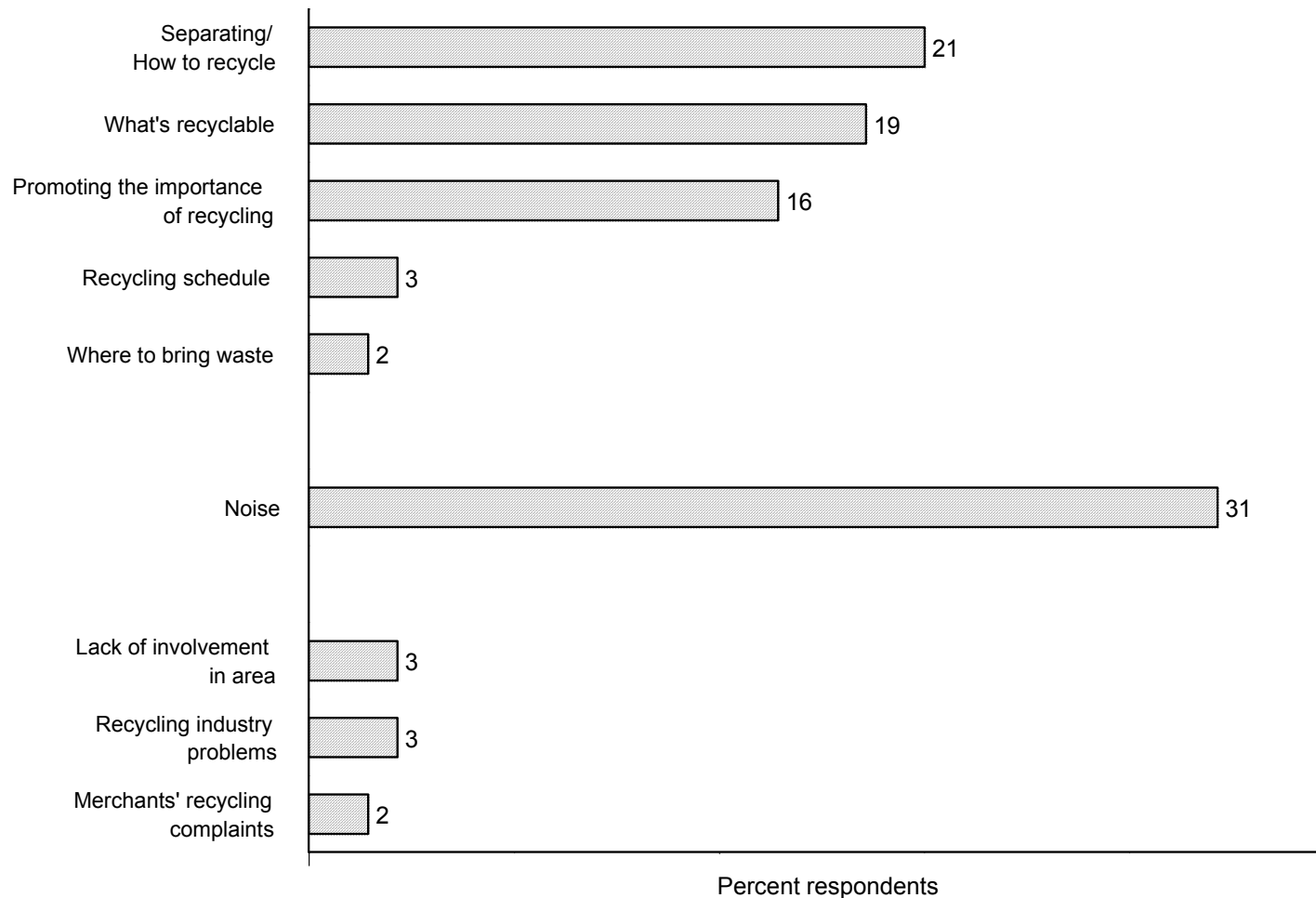
Residents have also heard about **what's recyclable** (19% of residents who have heard something) like what and what not to recycle, which recyclables go into boxes and which go into bags, and the rules on how to recycle paper and cans.

Sixteen percent of respondents who have heard something have heard **information on promoting recycling/the importance of recycling** (how to help the environment by recycling, commercials reminding one to recycle, and a push to get more people involved in recycling). Homeowners were more likely than renters to hear about **promoting/the importance of recycling** and messages that encourage more people to get involved (22% and 12% respectively).

It is important to distinguish between the positive and negative messages that residents are hearing. Eight percent of respondents who have heard something can recall a negative message about recycling (**lack of involvement in our area, recycling industry problems, merchants' recycling complaints**). Although we would like residents to recall something about recycling, it is important not to leave them with negative thoughts about recycling.

Although 51% of all residents have heard "something" about recycling lately, 16% of what they have heard is "noise." Residents are unsure of what they have heard and, therefore, responses like "don't remember," "nothing," "don't know," "new bins," "got something in the mail," and "other" are all considered noise. When determining whether the Recycling Awareness Campaign has made an impact, it will be important to filter out the noise.

What Have You Heard about Recycling?



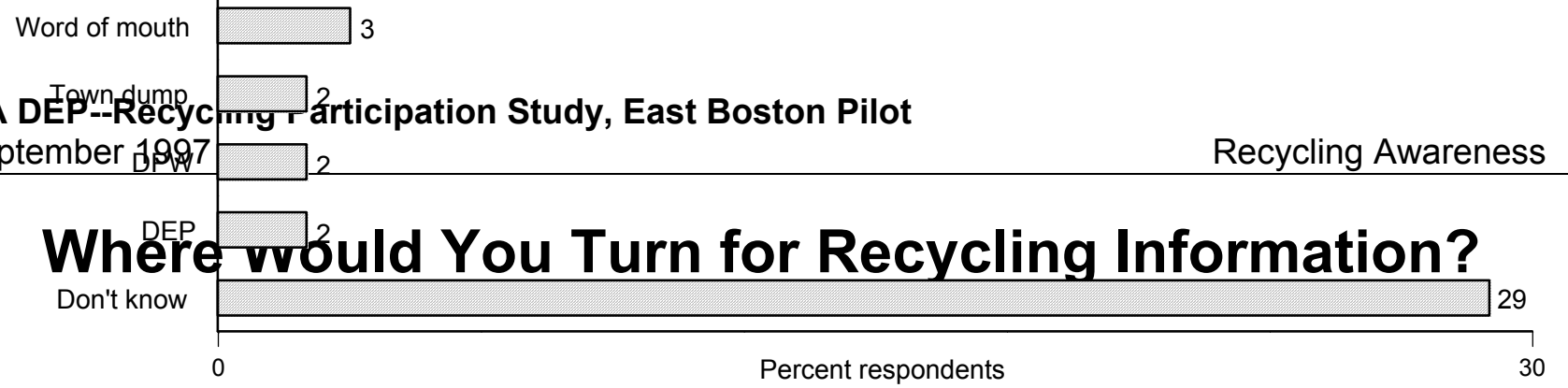
Learning about recycling

Residents were asked where they would turn for recycling information and 71% knew where to look. Many (22% of those who would know where to seek out information) say they would look to **town hall**, but a larger segment would not know where to turn (29%).

We will also watch these numbers after the Recycling Participation Campaign ends to see if residents have more realistic sources about where to turn for recycling information.

Although 71% of all respondents say they would know where to look for recycling information, 6% can be attributed to noise ("I know it all," "I never looked into it," "I'd look on the container," "not interested," and "other").

Where would You Turn for Recycling Information?



Outline

I. Introduction and Methodology

II. Key Findings

III. Recycling Awareness

IV. Overview of Recycling Patterns

V. Overall Attitudes toward Recycling

VI. Why Residents Recycle

VII. Home Ownership Recycling Pattern

VIII. Demographics

Overview of Recycling Patterns

Perceptions of recycling behavior

A majority of East Boston residents report that they "always" separate recyclables from regular household waste:

Always separate	60%
Mostly separate	11
Sometimes, rarely, or never separate	29

However, nearly three in ten East Boston residents (29%) report that, at best, they sometimes recycle. This represents perhaps the area of greatest potential in terms of increasing participation rates and the range of materials recycled.

Perceptions of recycling behavior vs. Self-reports of specific recycling activities

In addition to exploring people's perceptions of their general recycling behavior, we also asked them to what extent they recycle ten specific materials.

Overall, newspapers (62%) and plastic bottles (62%) are regularly recycled by more residents than any other materials.

- The percentage of households that always recycle newspapers in East Boston appears to be lower (62%) than for Massachusetts residents as a whole (73%) as reported in a statewide study completed in 1996.
- Opportunity to increase participation in newspaper recycling still exists, since 26% of newspaper subscribers don't always recycle their papers.
- An increase in plastic recycling also is possible since plastic containers (from such items as detergents and bleach) are recycled by only a little more than half of East Boston residents.

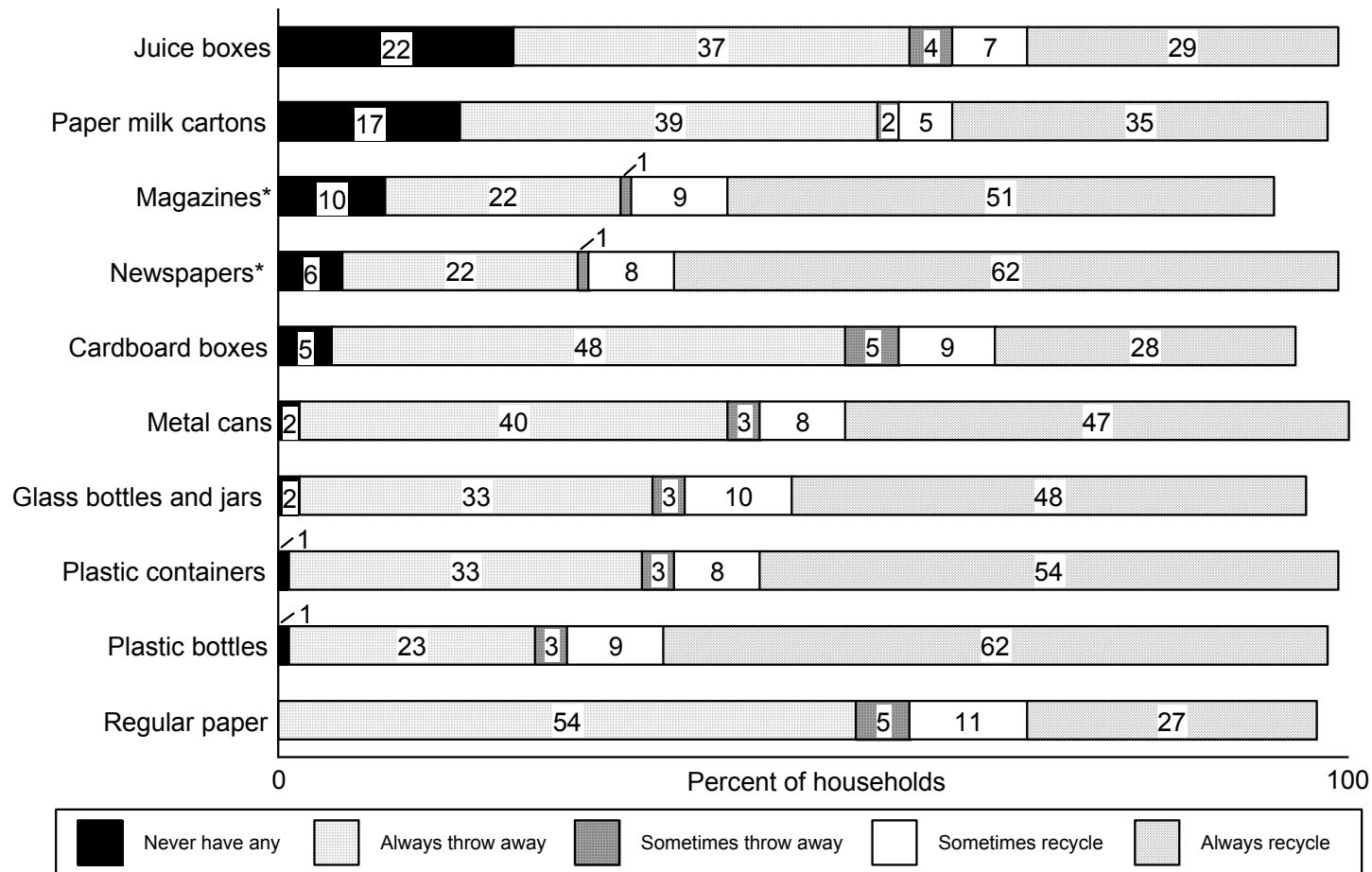
The other two most commonly recycled materials (glass and metal cans) are always recycled by less than half of the residents.

- Glass is recycled less by East Boston residents than residents statewide (58% compared to 73% in the 1996 study).

- Metal also is recycled less by East Boston residents than residents statewide (55% compared to 72% in the 1996 study).
- Regular paper is recycled by only about in ten people (38%).

Nearly half of East Boston residents always throw away cardboard (48%), with slightly fewer reporting that they always throw out paper milk cartons (39%) or juice boxes (37%) rather than recycle these materials.

Recycling Rates by Material Type (Overall)



* Only asked of respondents whose households subscribe to/purchase, 68%

Perceptions of recycling behavior vs. self reports of specific recycling activities

To get a sense of the outer range of recycling participation, residents were also grouped assuming a worst-case overlap between "recycling" and deposit return behavior. These groupings provide the probable low ranges for recycling and high ranges for non-recycling. Individuals belonging to a given category meet one of the criteria listed for each grouping.

Alpha recyclers--doing all they currently can (42%)

- Recycle all 4 target materials (newspapers, plastic, metal, and glass)
- Don't subscribe to newspapers and do recycle the 3 other target materials

Swing (high) recyclers--doing nearly all they can (10%)

- Subscribe to but don't recycle newspapers and do recycle 3 other target materials
- Subscribe to and recycle newspapers and do recycle 3 target materials altogether

Swing (low) recyclers--making a small effort (21%)

- Recycle one target material, neither of which is a deposit item (bottles or cans)
- Recycle two target materials, one of which is a deposit item (bottles or cans)
- Recycle two materials, neither of which is a deposit item (bottles or cans)

Non-participants--not making an effort (27%)

- Recycle none of the four target materials
- Recycle only one material, which is a deposit item (bottles or cans)
- Recycle two materials, both of which are deposit items (bottles or cans)

Summary of recycling groups

Alpha recyclers--doing all they currently can	42%
Swing (high) recyclers--doing nearly all they can	10%
Swing (low) recyclers--making a small effort	21%
Non-participants--not making an effort	27%

Recycling responsibility in the household

Recycling is more often the responsibility of a single household member than it is a shared responsibility:

Sole responsibility	57%
Shared responsibility	43

- More women are solely responsible for recycling (62%) than men (50%), but in households where there is shared responsibility, men are more likely to recycle (50%) than women (37%).
- Shared recyclers are more likely to be young (31% age 18-35) as compared with 24% of primary recyclers and, consequently, primary recyclers are more likely to be over age 55 (43%) as compared to shared recyclers (39%).
- Shared recyclers are also more likely to be home owners (40%) as compared to 30% of primary recyclers.

Primary recyclers have made a slightly deeper connection than shared recyclers to the benefits of recycling.

Primary recyclers hold a stronger belief in recycling's **benefits to society** (90% 6 or 7 on 7-point scale) than those who share recycling responsibility (81%).

- Primary recyclers hold a stronger belief in recycling's **benefits to East Boston** (50%) than those who share recycling responsibility (43%).
- Primary recyclers are only slightly more likely to believe **recycling benefits them personally** (39%) than those whose share (34%).
- However, shared recyclers are more likely to agree that they are **doing their part to help solve the trash problem** (23%) compared to primary recyclers (16%).

Recycling demographics: Children in the home

Recycling behavior correlates with the presence of children (under age 18) in the home.

- Homes without children are more likely to have "Alpha recyclers", that is, recyclers who say they always recycle all four target materials.
- Homes with children are more likely to have recycling non-participants.

	Child(ren) in home N=80	No children in home N=220
Alpha recyclers	34%	45%
Swing high	6	11
Swing low	26	20
Non-participants	34	25

Households with children are more pressed for time and, thus, may find less time in their schedules to spend on recycling. Although these results are similar to those in the statewide study conducted in 1996, the findings may be counter-intuitive. If we were to target and interview a community with a strong school-recycling program, our results may be different.

Recycling demographics: Education

Recycling is not strongly correlated with level of education. However, residents with college or graduate-level education are slightly more likely to be "Alpha recyclers."

- Those who recycle seem to have a strong conviction to recycling that is not explained by education.

	High school	Some college	College
	N=101	N=58	N=62
Alpha recyclers	40%	40%	45%
Swing (high)	16	7	2
Swing (low)	16	33	24
Non-participants	29	21	29

Recycling demographics: Age

Age is related to recycling in that younger residents are less likely to recycle than are older residents. The oldest group of residents (over 55) is the group most likely to recycle all of the four common recyclables.

- One-fourth of residents age 18-35 always recycle all four materials, compared to 51% of those over age 55.
- Similarly, four in ten of those age 18-35 are non-participants, compared to 16% of those over age 55.
- Massachusetts residents age 18-35 (according to the statewide study conducted in 1996) are more likely than East Boston residents to recycle since 38% of statewide residents in that age group are alpha recyclers and only 34% are non-participants.

	18-35	36-55	56+
	N=88	N=92	N=105
Alpha recyclers	24%	44%	51%
Swing (high)	7	7	16
Swing (low)	26	25	16
Non-participants	43	25	16

Recycling demographics: Age (cont.)

The pattern among younger residents is driven mainly by the 18-25 age group, 33% (five residents out of 15 in that age group) of whom do not recycle any of the four recyclables. Overall, the highest participation occurs in the over-65 group, 53% (nineteen residents out of 36 in that age group) of whom recycle all four materials.

Age may not be directly driving recycling behavior, however. Other variables which may be implicated in the association between age and recycling include home ownership and tenure in the community.

Younger residents are much more likely to be in rental housing (85%) and to have lived in their community for shorter periods of time (48% have lived in East Boston for 5 years or less).

	Young 18-35	Middle 36-55	Older 56+
Living in apartments	42%	21%	16%
Lived in community 0-5 yrs	48	13	7

Recycling demographics: Tenure in community

The length of time residents have lived in the community is related to level of recycling participation.

- Those who have lived in a particular community for shorter periods of time are more likely to be non-participants (42%).
- Those who have resided in their community for 16 or more years are more likely to be "Alpha recyclers" (49%).

	5 years or less	6-15 years	Over 15 years
	N=64	N=77	N=150
Alpha recyclers	27%	38%	49%
Swing (high)	5	8	13
Swing (low)	27	18	22
Non-participants	42	36	16

Recycling demographics: Household income

Household income is slightly related to recycling participation.

- Higher income residents (\$50,000 or more) are slightly more likely to be "Alpha recyclers" than are those with lower household incomes
- Residents with lower household incomes are most likely to be non-participants.

	Less than \$25,000 N=102	\$25,000- \$49,999 N=84	\$50,000 or more N=38
Alpha recyclers	39%	41%	50%
Swing (high)	8	8	8
Swing (low)	23	27	16
Non-participants	30	24	26

Outline

- I. Introduction and Methodology
- II. Key Findings
- III. Recycling Awareness
- IV. Overview of Recycling Patterns

V. Overall Attitudes toward Recycling
--

- VI. Why Residents Recycle
- VII. Home Ownership Recycling Pattern
- VIII. Demographics

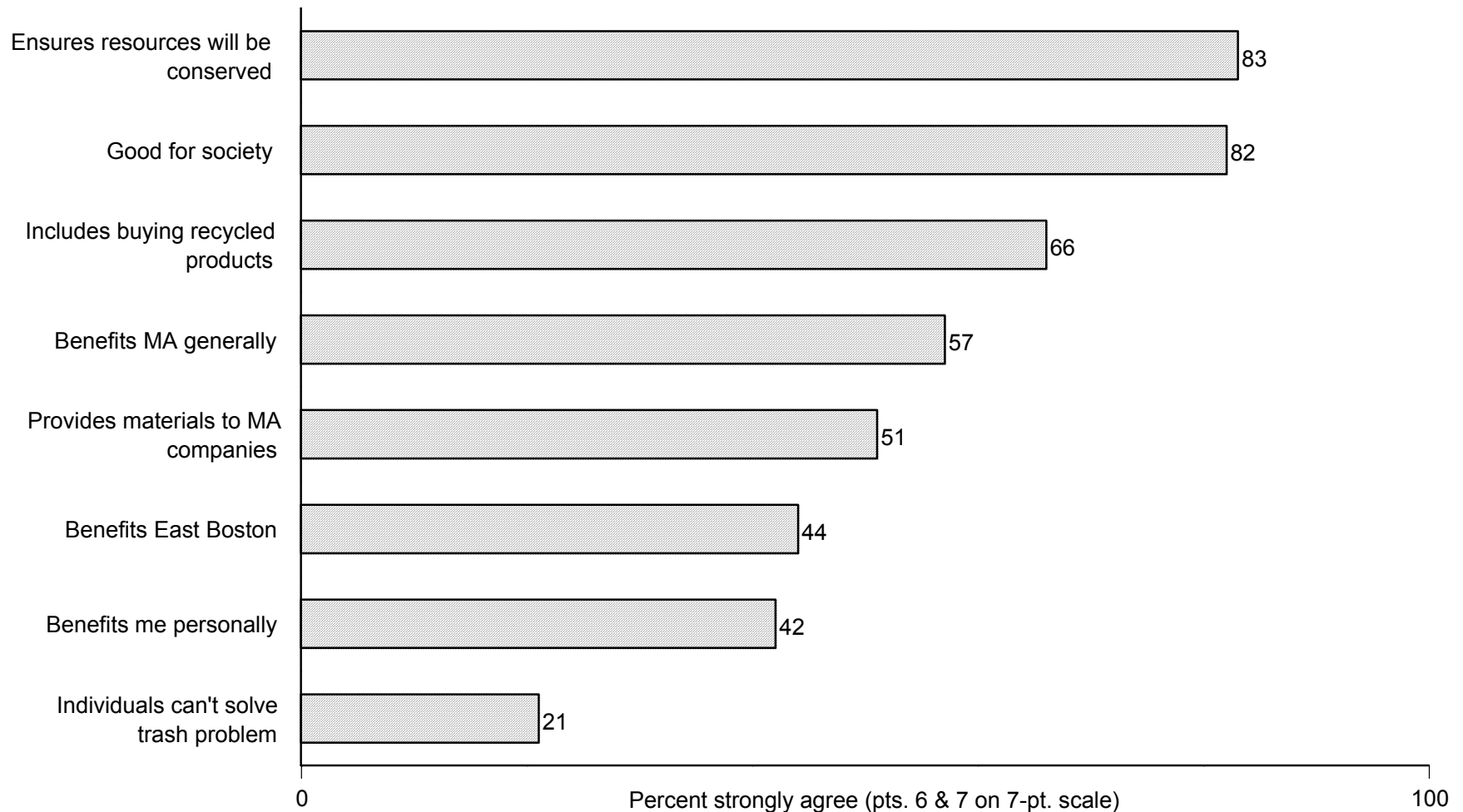
Overall Attitudes toward Recycling

In this section we examine the general attitudes East Boston residents have towards recycling.

Overall, residents are more likely to say that their household is committed to recycling (60%) than they are to agree that recycling benefits Massachusetts in general (57%), that recycling benefits their community (44%), or that recycling benefits them personally (42%).

- Residents who provide high ratings when asked how much recycling benefits them personally are twice as likely to recycle all four common types as are other residents (48% and 23% respectively).
- Residents who provide high ratings when asked how much recycling benefits their community are also more likely to recycle all four materials than are other residents.

Perceptions of the Overall Benefits of Recycling



Regardless of what they actually do, a large majority (82%) of East Boston residents believe that recycling is **good for society**. A similar majority (83%) believe that **recycling conserves resources for the future**, but fewer agree with the more specific statement that **recycling provides Massachusetts companies with "raw" materials** (51%).

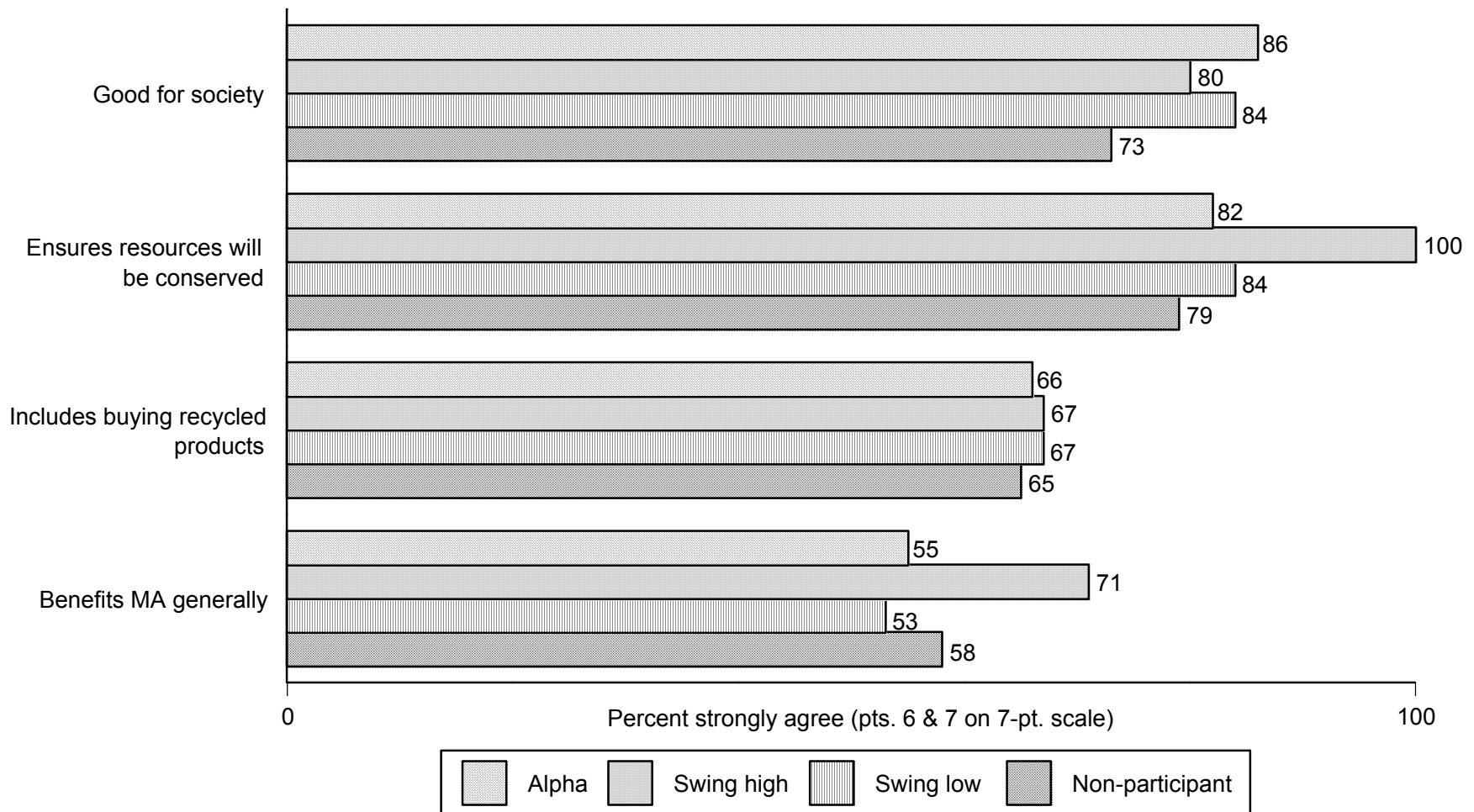
As with residents statewide, it appears that broad messages about the positive benefits of recycling have been largely accepted by East Boston residents, but that agreement with these sentiments does not have a direct bearing on behavior.

Most residents (58%) disagree with the idea that **individuals cannot do much to help solve the solid waste problem**. However, among those who disagree, 23% do not recycle at all and an additional 9% recycle only one or two of the four common recyclables.

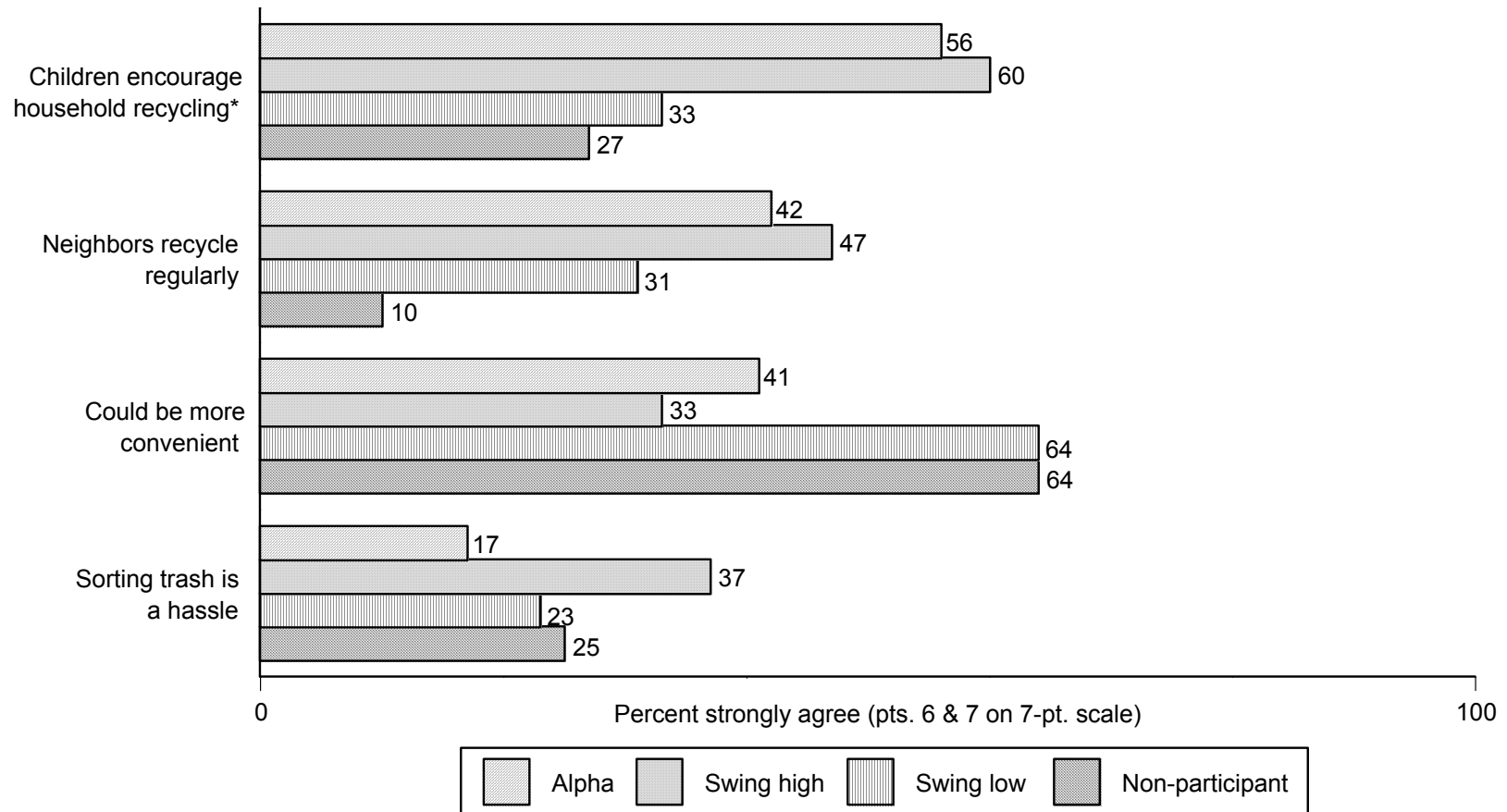
The next few charts show perceptions of the overall benefits of recycling by recycling segment.

- Non-participants are less likely to agree that recycling is **good for society** than are other recycling segments.
- All four groups are equally likely to agree that **recycling includes buying recycled products**.
- Swing High recyclers are most likely to believe that **recycling conserves resources for future generations** and that **recycling benefits Massachusetts generally**.
- Alpha recyclers are most likely to agree that **recycling benefits East Boston and me personally**.

Perceptions of Overall Benefits by Recycling Habits



Perceptions of Overall Benefits by Recycling Habits (Continued)



* Percent benefits a great deal (pts. 6 & 7 on 7-pt. scale)

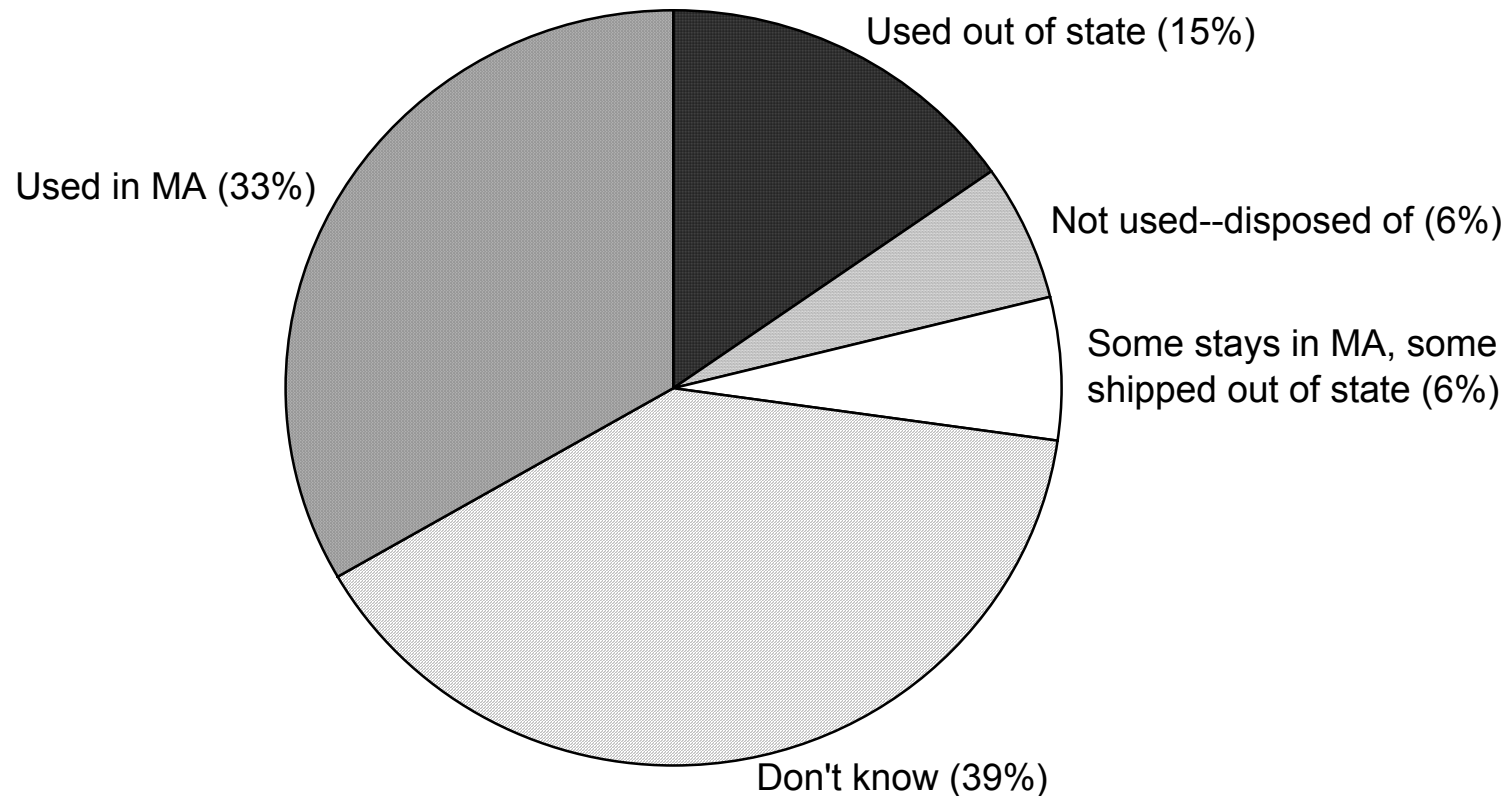
Beliefs about recycling

When East Boston residents were asked what happens to trash that is separated so it can be recycled, almost one in four residents (39%) did not know. These findings are similar to the statewide study.

One in three residents believes that these materials are used in Massachusetts (33%); some believe that these materials are shipped to other states (15%), and a few (6%) say that some material stays in the state and some is shipped out-of-state.

Six percent of residents (19 people) believe recyclables are not ever recycled but are actually disposed of. This group, however, is as likely to recycle all four target materials (42%) as it to not recycle at all (37%).

Beliefs about Recycling: Disposition of Recyclables



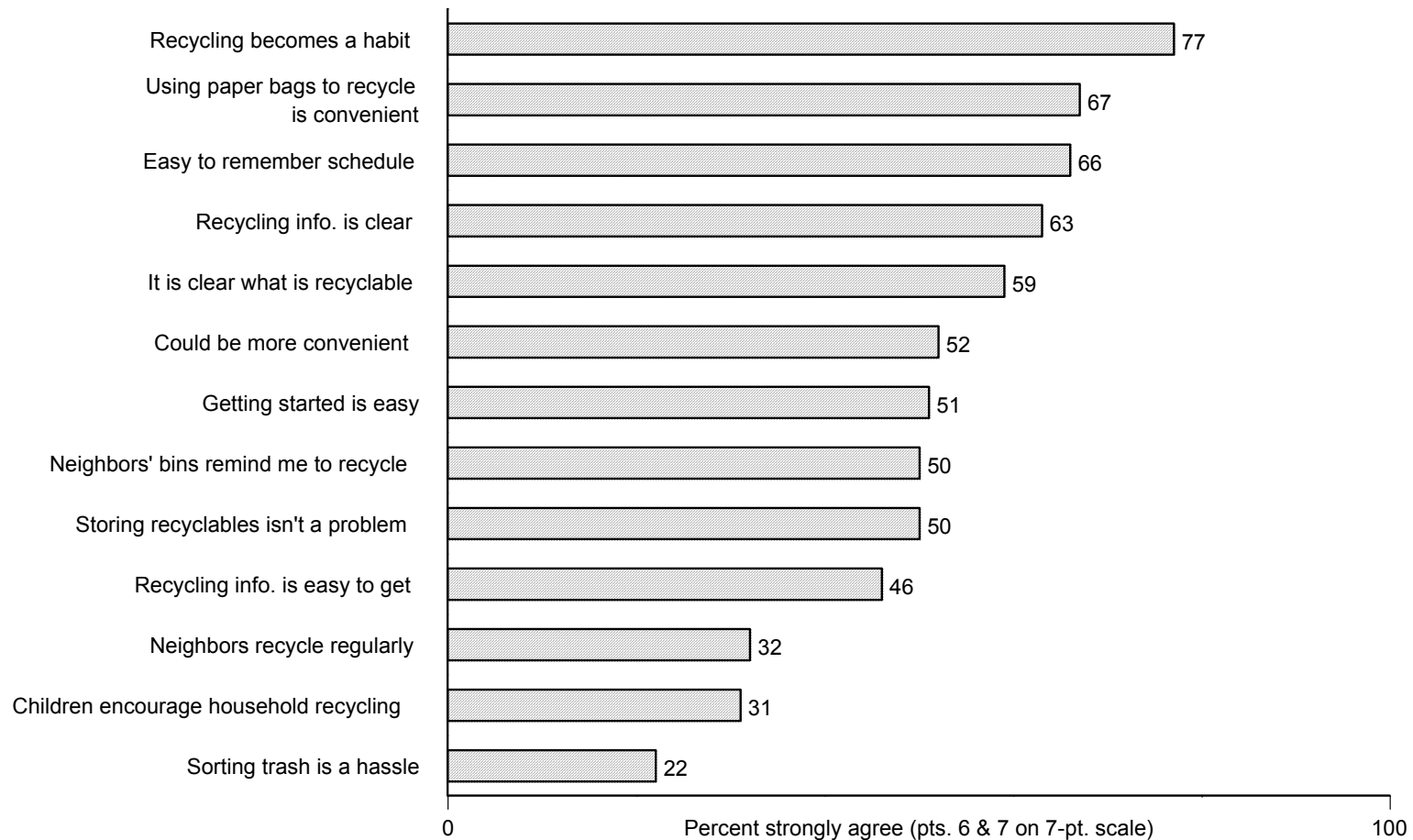
When asked their opinions about recycling, almost eight in ten agree that recycling becomes a habit once one gets started. On the other hand, only about one-half agree that getting started in recycling is easy (51%).

Respondents were also asked to rate the availability and clarity of information about recycling. When asked about recycling information, nearly one-half think information is easy to get (46%), and six in ten (63%) think that recycling information is clear. Fifty-nine percent agree that it is clear what types of materials are recyclable.

While more than six in ten residents (66%) agree that the recycling schedule is easy to remember, one-half of all residents (50%) agree that seeing their neighbors' recycling bins reminds them to recycle. However, East Boston residents are less likely (32%) to agree with the statement "Neighbors recycle regularly" as compared to Massachusetts residents as a whole (52%). This may suggest that fewer residents recycle in East Boston, but seeing neighbors' bins serves as an important reminder to recycle.

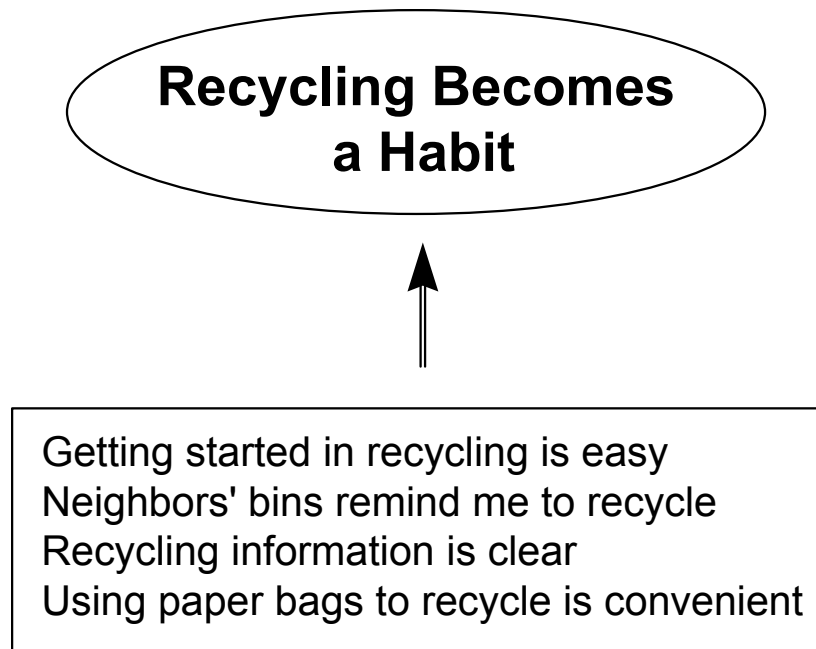
Relatively few residents feel sorting recyclables is a hassle (22%). However, renters are twice as likely than homeowners to disagree that storing things to recycle later is not a problem (22% and 10% respectively).

Attitudes toward the Recycling Process



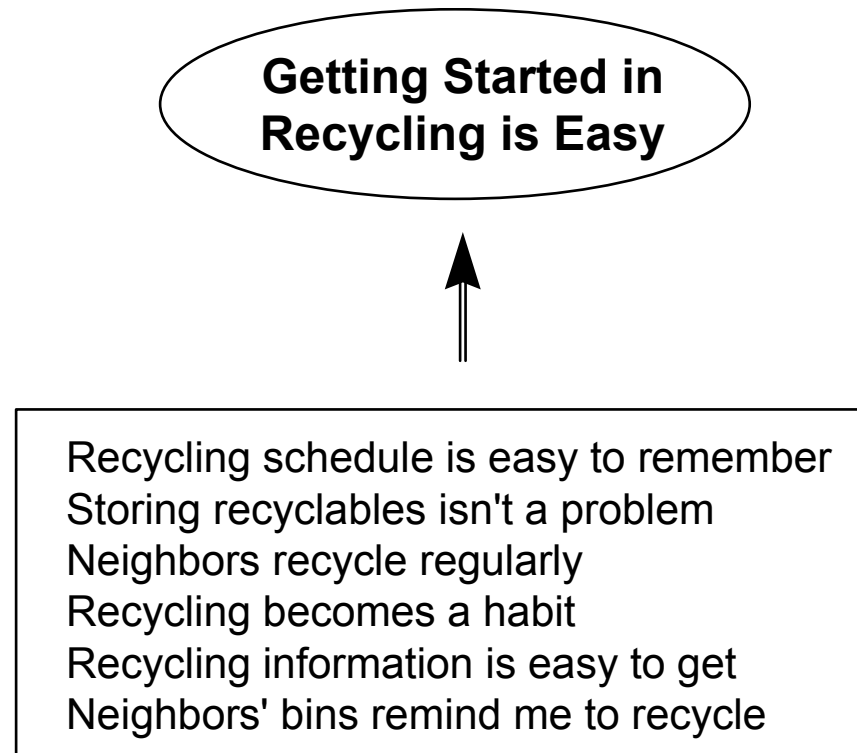
* Among respondents who say they have children of high-school age or younger in the household

As in our 1996 statewide study, this study's findings suggest that recycling participation is strongest among those for whom it has become a part of a household routine and lifestyle. Using multiple-regression analysis, we can determine which other aspects of the recycling process are related to the perception that recycling becomes a habit.



- The extent to which people think recycling becomes a habit is strongly related to **getting started is easy, neighbors' bins remind me to recycle, clear recycling information, and using paper bags to recycle is convenient.**

Using multiple-regression analysis, we can also determine which other aspects of the recycling process are related to the perception that getting started is easy.



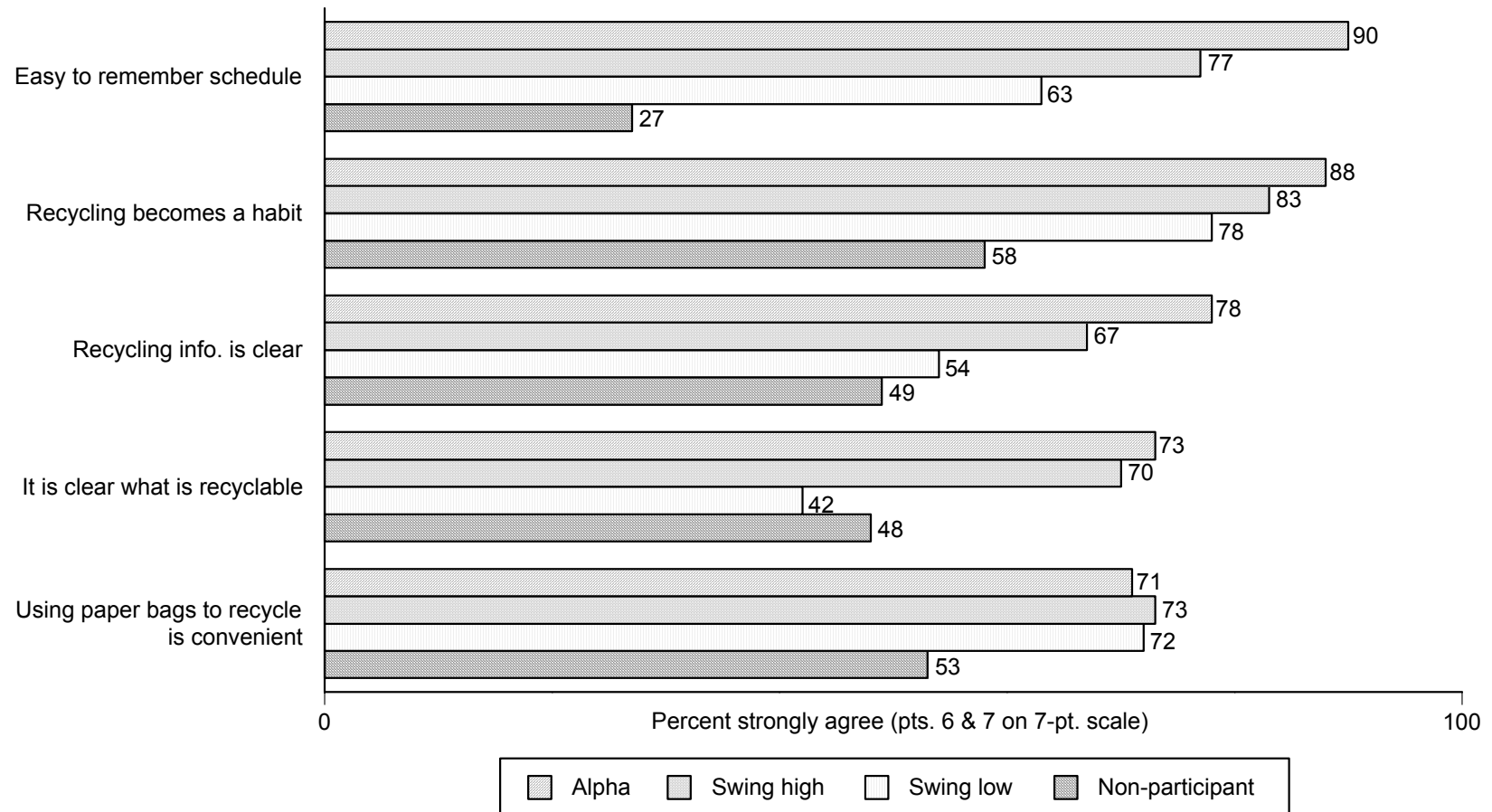
The perception that getting started is easy is strongly related to having a recycling **schedule that is easy to remember**, **easy storage**, the social impact of **neighbors recycling regularly**, and **recycling becoming a habit**.

These findings suggest that encouraging both the initial effort of recycling and the habitual activity of regular recycling are strongly related to factors of **ease and convenience**. Recycling will become a habit by making it **easy to start** and by providing reminders (such as **neighbors' bins**). People may be encouraged to start recycling if **easy-to-remember schedules** and **easy storage** are provided.

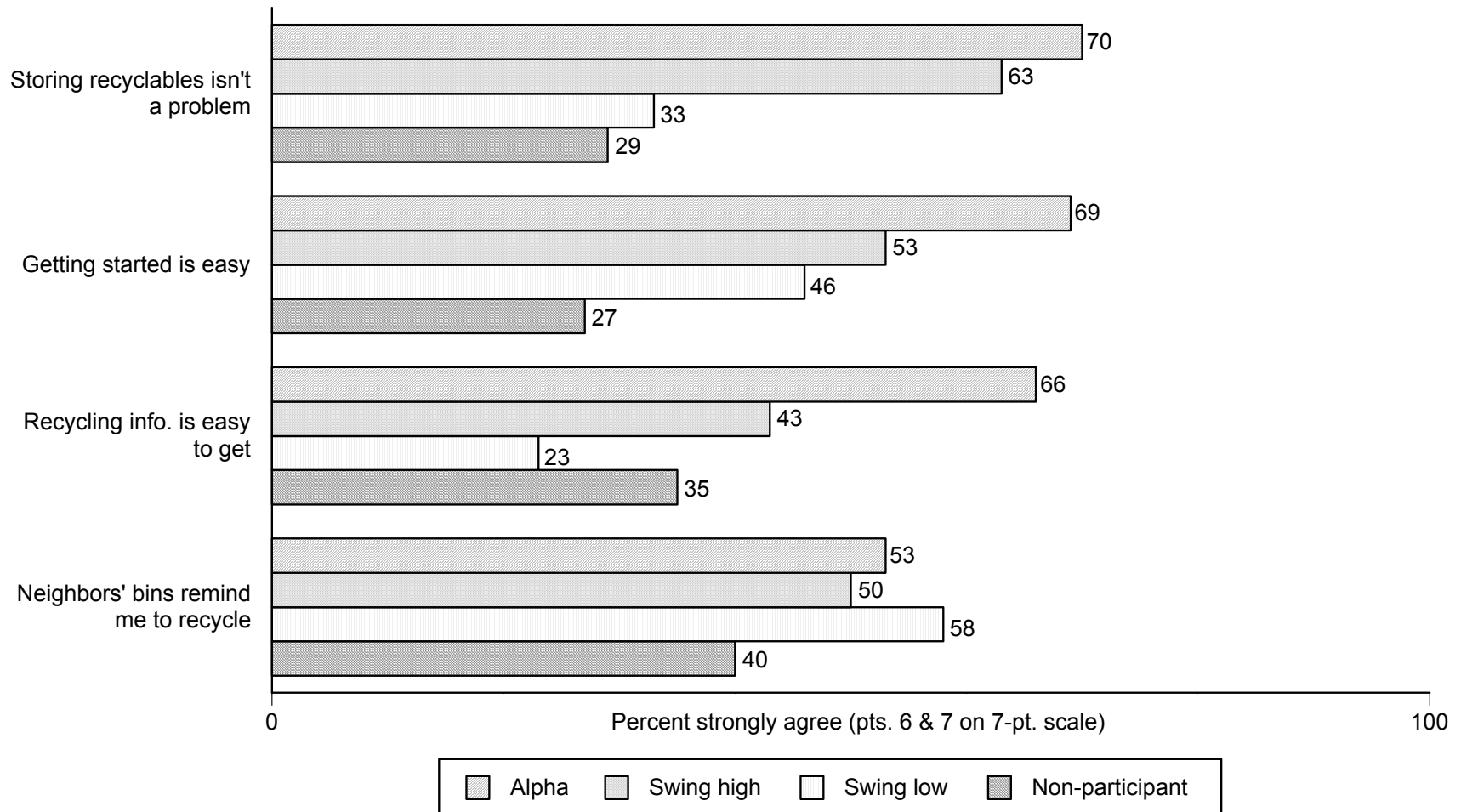
The next few charts show attitudes toward the recycling process according to current recycling habits.

- Recyclers who recycle a greater number of materials are more likely to agree that the **schedule is easy to remember**, that **recycling information is clear**, that **recycling becomes a habit**, that **it is clear what is recyclable**, that **storing recyclables isn't a problem**, that **getting started recycling is easy**, and that **recycling information is easy to get**.

Attitudes toward the Recycling Process by Recycling Habits

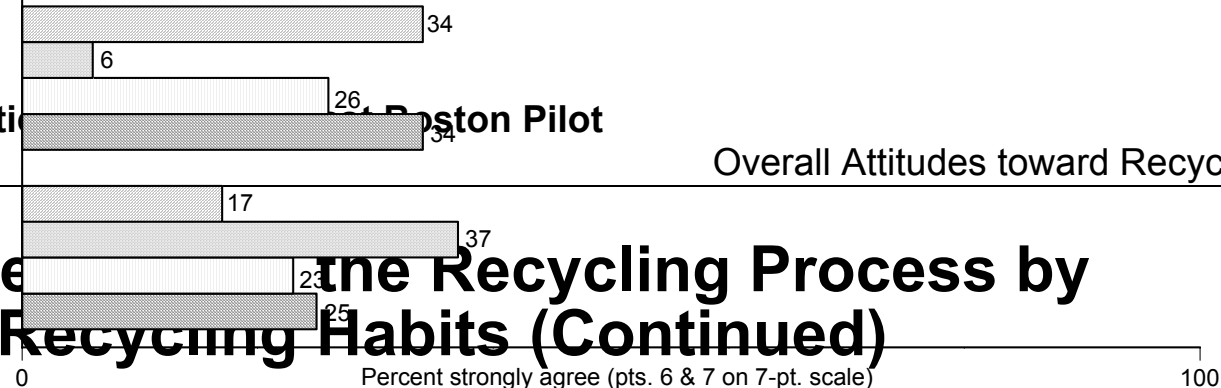


Attitudes toward the Recycling Process by Recycling Habits (Continued)



Sorting trash is a hassle

Attitudes toward the Recycling Process by Recycling Habits (Continued)



Alpha Swing high Swing low Non-participant

Outline

- I. Introduction and Methodology
- II. Key Findings
- III. Recycling Awareness
- IV. Overview of Recycling Patterns
- V. Overall Attitudes toward Recycling

VI. Why Residents Recycle

- VII. Home Ownership Recycling Pattern
- VIII. Demographics

Why Residents Recycle

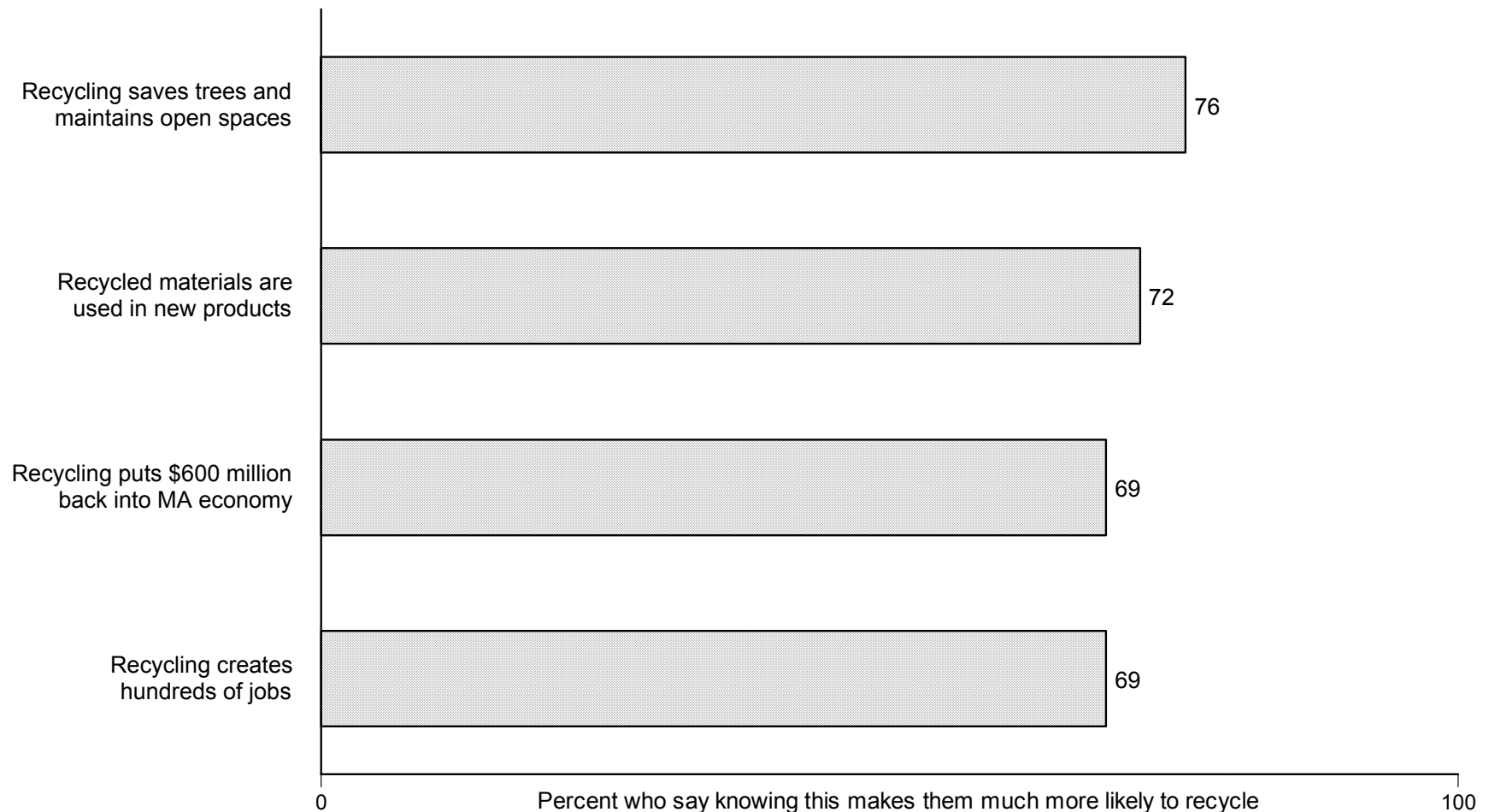
Motivating recycling participation

This study tested the motivational value of four messages about the benefits of recycling. For all messages tested, at least one out of six respondents say that the message made them much more likely to recycle.

According to self-reporting, residents are most likely (76%) to be persuaded by a message about saving trees and maintaining open spaces that recycling saves annually, while three-fourths (72%) would be motivated by the idea that recycled materials are used in new products.

Again, residents have high agreement with the broad, moral good of recycling, but there is little behavioral outcome.

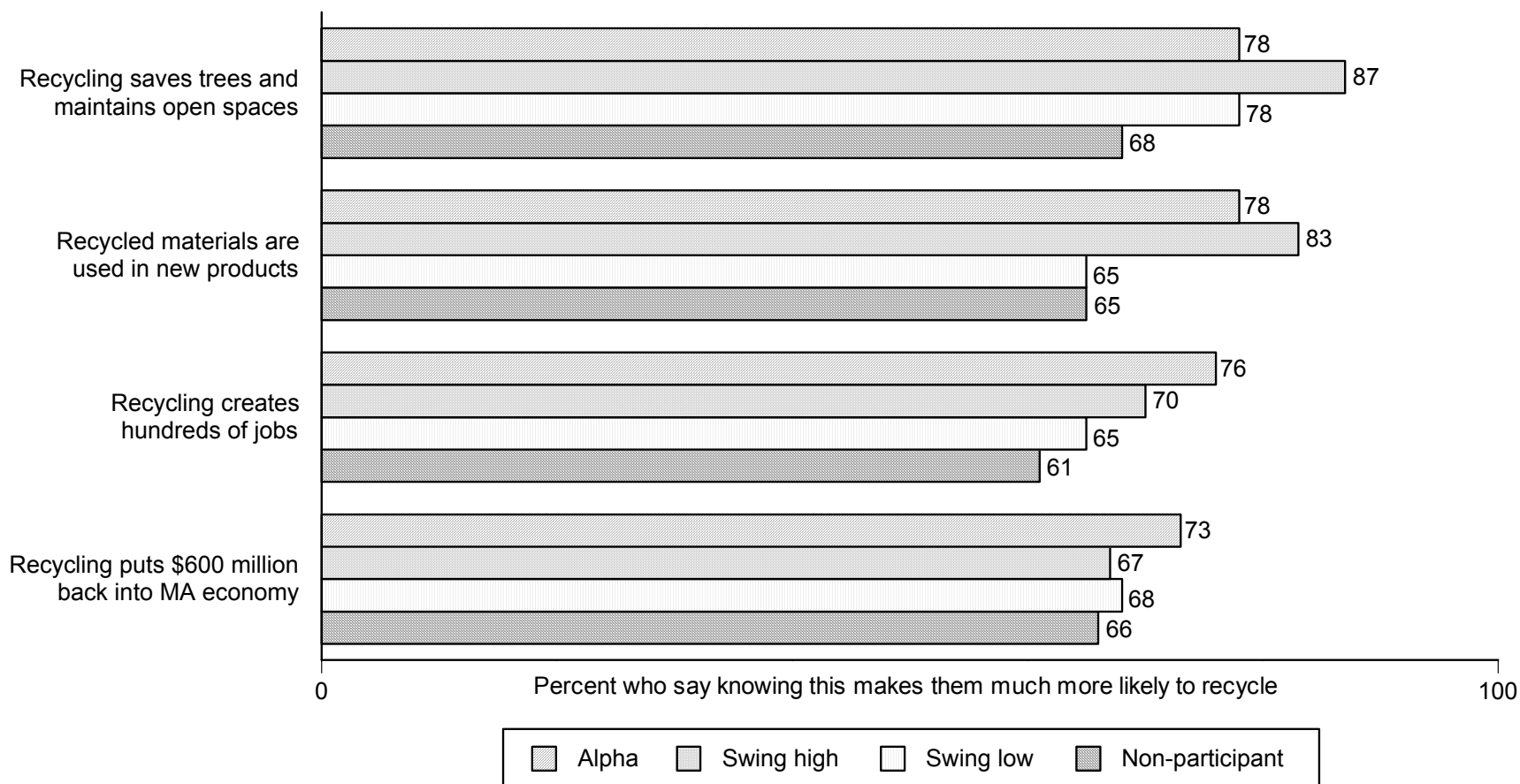
Messages to Motivate Increased Recycling Participation



The following charts look at the motivational value of each message according to current recycling habits.

- In general, all messages rate high in motivating residents to become more likely to recycle.
- Swing (low) recyclers and Non-participants are clearly less motivated by all recycling messages than are the other two groups.
- Swing (high) recyclers are more motivated than are all other groups by the messages **recycling saves trees and maintains open spaces** and **recycling materials are used in new products**. These may be important recycling benefits to stress to propel the Swing High group into increased recycling participation.

Messages to Motivate Increased Recycling Participation by Recycling Habits



Drivers of household commitment to recycling and propensity to recycle

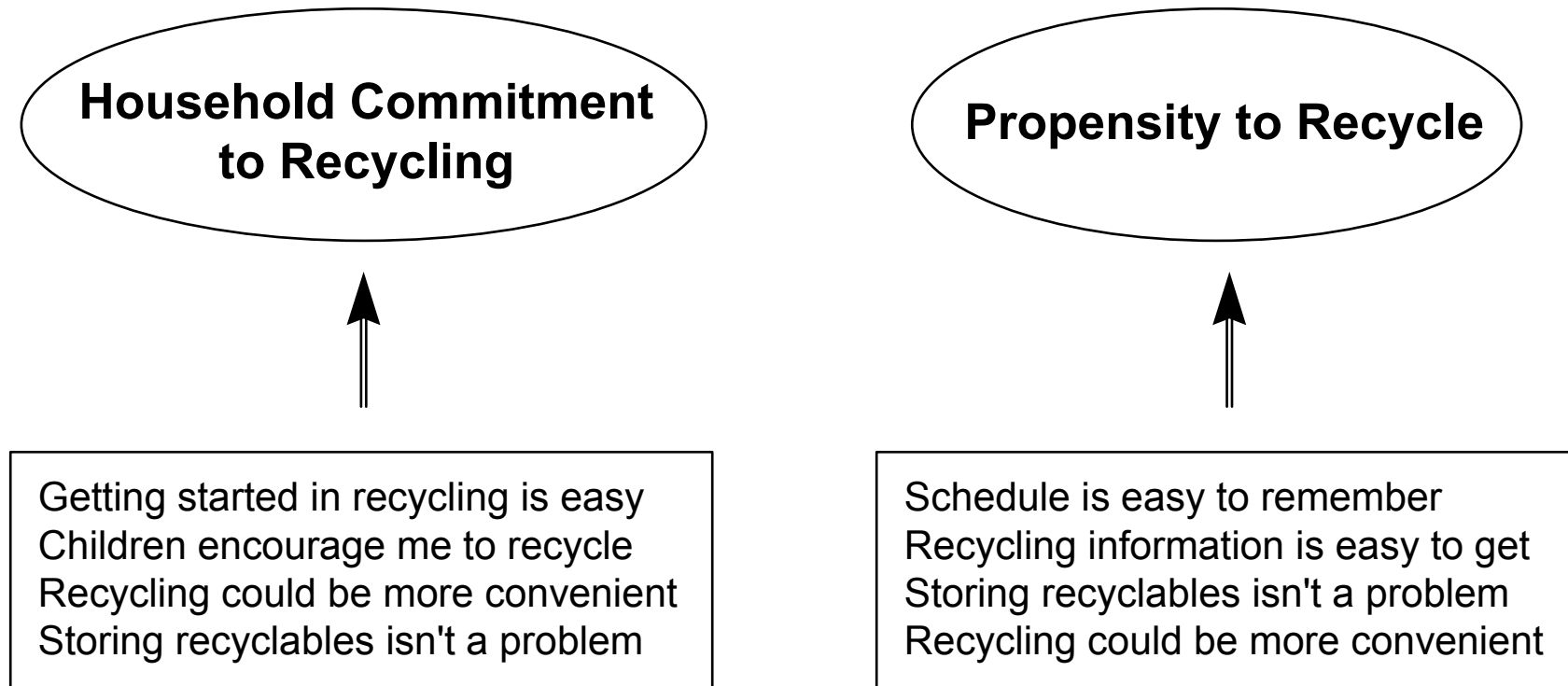
Next, we look at the relationship between specific attitudes toward the recycling process and broader beliefs about and commitment to recycling. Using regression analysis, we attempt to explain responses in four areas: perceptions of the personal benefits of recycling, perceptions of the community benefits of recycling, household commitment to recycling, and propensity to recycle.

- People's specific attitudes about the recycling process serve as poor predictors of their perceptions that recycling benefits them personally or benefits their community.

Attitudes toward recycling do, however, provide a fairly substantial model of household commitment to recycling.

- Specifically, the extent to which people think it is **easy to get started** is the most reliable predictor of household commitment to recycling. The perception that **kids encourage everyone to recycle**, **recycling could be more convenient**, and that **storing recyclables isn't a problem** also influence their overall household commitment to recycling.
- Having a **schedule that is easy to remember** most strongly relates to recycling propensity, followed by **getting information is easy**, **storing recyclables isn't a problem**, and **recycling could be more convenient**.

Drivers of Household Commitment to Recycling and Propensity to Recycle



Overall attitudes toward recycling by recycling participation

Many people are committed to recycling because they believe there is a benefit to society.

However, the closer the benefit comes to the individual level, the less likely all respondents are able to see the benefit.

Alpha recyclers are the most likely to believe that recycling benefits both society and themselves personally.

		Alpha	Swing High	Swing Low	Non- Participant
General	Household is committed to recycling	88%	80%	54%	13%
↓	Recycling is good for society	86%	80%	84%	73%
↓	Recycling benefits MA generally	55%	71%	53%	58%
↓	Recycling benefits my community	48%	43%	39%	41%
Specific	Recycling benefits me personally	48%	40%	38%	37%

The drivers of the belief that recycling is good for society

Given that nearly all residents surveyed believe that recycling is generally good for society, this broad attitude warrants further investigation. Using regression analysis, we can determine the relationship between other attitudes toward recycling and the idea that recycling is good for society.

- The belief that recycling is good for society is largely driven by the notion that recycling conserves resources for future generations.
- Economic concerns also play a role; the extent to which people believe buying recycled products is part of recycling and that recycling provides raw materials for local companies also affects the belief that recycling is good for society.

These findings support the conclusions of the state-wide study done in 1996.

Outline

- I. Introduction and Methodology
- II. Key Findings
- III. Recycling Awareness
- IV. Overview of Recycling Patterns
- V. Overall Attitudes toward Recycling
- VI. Why Residents Recycle

VII. Home Ownership Recycling Pattern
--

- VIII. Demographics

Home Ownership Recycling Pattern

Recycling appears to relate to home ownership.

- Residents who always recycle are almost twice as likely to be homeowners.
- In contrast, people who do not always recycle any of the four target materials are three times more likely to rent their homes.

	Own home	Rent
Alpha recyclers	59%	34%
Swing (high)	10	10
Swing (low)	18	23
Non-participants	13	33

Homeowners' versus renters' attitudes toward recycling

- Six in ten homeowners (65%) feel it is easy to start recycling (compared to 46% of renters) and nearly nine out of ten (85%) believe recycling becomes a habit once you get started (compared to 74% of renters).
- Homeowners are also more likely to agree that information is clear (69%) and easy to get (55%) compared to renters.
- Homeowners are more likely to believe that their neighbors recycle (36%) and that seeing neighbors' bins serves as a reminder to recycle (53%).
- More than one-half of renters believe recycling could be more convenient (53%) and feel storing things to recycle later is a problem (56%). Renters are also more likely to believe sorting the trash is a hassle (26%).
- Just fewer than one-half of renters (46%) are not clear on what can be recycled, compared to three in ten (31%) homeowners. Even Alpha renters are less clear compared to Alpha homeowners (11% and 4% disagree) about what can be recycled. This may be related to renters reporting that they receive less written literature on recycling from the town or state (15% of homeowners learn about recycling from brochures supplied by their town, compared to 8% of renters).

- Swing (low) and Non-participant renters also consider storage a problem. Twenty-seven percent of Swing (low) renters and 33% of Non-participant renters say **storing things to recycle later is a problem for me**.
- Swing high renters are most likely to consider **sorting the trash to be a real hassle** (40% agree) as compared to only 24% of Alpha recyclers. Perhaps by educating swing (high) renters about the ease of sorting, they may become Alpha recyclers.
- Among Alpha recyclers, renters are nearly three times more likely to consider **sorting trash to be a hassle** (23% of renters agree compared to only 9% of owners).
- Alpha renters are more likely to agree that **seeing neighbor's bins reminds them to recycle** compared to Alpha homeowners (56% and 49% respectively).
- Non-participant renters are more likely to agree that **recycling could be made more convenient**: 67% of Non-participant renters agree vs. only 42% of Non-participant homeowners. Non-participant renters are less likely to feel getting started is easy (25% compared to 39% of owners agree that getting started is easy).

Attitudes toward Recycling	% 6 and 7 on 7-point scale	
	Owners	Renters
Recycling becomes a habit	85	74
The schedule is easy to remember	82	58
It is clear what can be recycled	69	54
Information is clear and straightforward	69	62
Getting started is easy	65	46
Using paper bags is convenient	64	68
Getting information is easy	55	43
Storing things to recycle later is not a problem	59	47
Seeing neighbors' bins reminds me to recycle	53	49
Recycling could be more convenient	47	53
Kids encourage household to recycle*	44	39
Neighbors recycle regularly	36	30
Having to sort the trash is a real hassle	16	26

*= Among households with children

- Although homeowners are more likely than renters to believe **recycling is good for society**, renters are more likely to agree **that recycling benefits themselves, their community, and the state** as a whole.
- Despite renters' beliefs that there are personal and global benefits to recycling, they are less likely than homeowners to recycle.

Drivers of Participation	% 6 and 7 on 7-point scale	
	Owners	Renters
Recycling is good for society	88	79
Individuals can't do much to help solve the trash problem	25	21
Recycling will ensure resources are conserved	88	81
Recycling provides companies with the materials they need	47	52
Part of recycling is buying recycled products	64	67
Benefits me personally	32	46
Benefits your community	37	47
Benefits Massachusetts generally	54	58

Outline

- I. Introduction and Methodology
- II. Key Findings
- III. Recycling Awareness
- IV. Overview of Recycling Patterns
- V. Overall Attitudes toward Recycling
- VI. Why Residents Recycle
- VII. Home Ownership Recycling Pattern

VIII. Demographics

Demographics

Respondent demographics

Sex

Male	43%
Female	57

Age

18-25	5%
26-35	24
36-45	18
46-55	12
56-65	12
Over 65	23
Refused	5

Education

Some grade school	3%
Some high school	9
Graduated high school	34
Technical/vocational school	4
Some college	19
Graduated college	21
Graduate school	6
Don't know/Refused	3

Respondent demographics (cont.)

Income

\$0-7,999	6%
\$8-11,999	9
\$12-14,999	5
\$15-19,999	5
\$20-24,999	9
\$25-34,999	14
\$35-49,999	14
\$50-74,999	8
\$75-99,999	3
\$100,000 +	2
Don't know/Refused	25

Number of children in household

None	73%
One	12
Two	9
Three	5
Four or more	1

Respondent demographics (cont.)

Ethnic background

White	80%
Hispanic	7
Black	4
Asian	1
Other group	2
Mixed	3
(Refused)	2

Primary language

English	87%
Spanish	7
Italian	3
Other	3

Number years in community

5 or fewer	21%
6-15	26
More than 15	50
Don't know	3

Type of dwelling

2- to 3-family or duplex	60%
Apartment	24
Single-family detached	8
Townhouse/Condo	6
Other	1